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Jewellery Gallery
Formative Evaluation Report:
Design a Ring – Phase 1

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INTERIM REPORT #3

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1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of the formative evaluation of an early version of “Design a ring”, a high-tech interactive exhibit. The aim of this study was to assess:

- the basic levels of functionality of the exhibit;
- visitors’ understanding of the exhibit; and
- whether the exhibit encourages further exploration of the Jewellery Gallery.

1.1 Method and Visitor Profile

A total of 16 visitors participated in this study. Thirteen visitors were in a social group - 12 were in an adult group (6 adult groups in total) and one in a family group (one family group in total) - while 3 visitors were visiting the V&A alone. There were more women than men in the sample and the most represented age categories were 25-34 and 18-24 years respectively (see Table 1). More than half of the visitors were British, 4 were white Europeans, one was Canadian, one Australian and one Brazilian. Five out of 16 visitors were professionals in the creative industries, one was student, and the remaining 10 visitors were classified as individual adults not in the previous categories.

Table 1 *Visitor profile by age and gender*

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60-65	Total
Male	2	3			1	1	7
Female	2	3	1	2		1	9
Total	4	6	1	2	1	2	16

Data collection took place on Tuesday 6th November in the Sculpture Gallery of the museum. Visitors were invited to have a look at a non-working prototype of the exhibit and offer their feedback. Visitors were guided through the prototype and were asked questions regarding content and functionality. A brief interview followed at the end of the walk-through. Visitors’ interactions and responses were recorded (a copy of the evaluation tool is included in Appendix I). Data were qualitatively analysed looking for themes and patterns.

2 Findings

2.1 Buttons functionality

Oval and rectangular sections

- More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of visitors could not distinguish between the “oval” and “rectangular sections” and therefore were not able to comment on what those two buttons stood for. The main reason for that was that there were no apparent differences in the two images that represented the two different sections.
- Only 2 visitors seemed to have a clear understanding of what “oval” and “rectangular sections” meant.

Ring width button

- Although it was quite clear to visitors that they had to drag the scale in order to change the “ring width” there was no consistency in their interpretation of the phrase “ring width”. More specifically:
 - eight visitors thought that “ring width” referred to thickness of the band of the ring; and
 - five visitors said that it referred to the ring size. This misunderstanding however, is not likely to represent a problem at a working version of the exhibit.

Start again button

- All visitors understood what the “start again” button meant.

Ring complete button

- All but one visitor understood what the “ring complete” button stood for.
- One visitor who didn’t get the functionality of the button wondered “I don’t get that - how can you finish your ring if you haven’t gone through all stages?”

Ring metal type button

- Almost $\frac{2}{3}$ of visitors did not notice the instructions at the bottom of the screen and thought that they could just select a “metal type” by pressing the appropriate button.
- Five visitors only said that they had to press and drag a metal type in order to select it for their ring.
- One visitor commented that “it would be easier if you could just press to choose”.

Return to menu button

- Almost 2/3 of visitors thought the “return to menu” button would take them back to the list of design options.
- The remaining 5 visitors said that this button would take them back to the start of the interactive.

Scale motif button

- All but one visitor understood what the “scale motif” button stood for as well as how to scale a motif.

Rotate motif, Remove motif, Rotate ring buttons

- All visitors understood the meaning and functionality of the “rotate motif”, “remove motif” and “rotate ring” buttons.
- All visitors understood that they had to use the arrows in the “rotate motif” screen if they wished to rotate their ring in different directions.

Add another motif button

- However there was a slight confusion as to what the “add another motif” button meant:
 - Seven visitors thought that this button would change the motif they had already selected to another one.
 - Another 7 visitors said that this button would add an extra motif to their ring.
 - One visitor thought that the “add another motif” button would help her to “design another motif instead of choosing from the ones provided”.
 - Another visitor admitted that he could not tell what this button meant.

Remove stone button

- Two visitors who tested the exhibit together thought that the “remove stone” button was confusing because they could not see “why someone would want to remove the stone”.

Edit motif button

- Three quarters of visitors reported that the “edit” button would help them to make changes to their ring.
- Three visitors said that this button would take them back.
- One visitor could not tell what this button stood for.

Preview button

- All but one visitor said that the “preview” button would provide a larger or better view of the selected gemstone.
- One visitor thought that by clicking on this button “you can see your finished item so that if you don't like it you can change it”.

Engraving screen

- All visitors understood how to engrave a personal note on their ring. Furthermore, they all had a clear understanding of the functionality of “engraving type style” and “engraving position” buttons.
- One visitor noted that she could not figure out “how to move on after finished with engraving”.

Presentation screens

- More than half of the visitors reported no specific problems with the “presentation screens”.
- Three visitors observed that although they were given the possibility to rotate their finished ring in order to view it from different perspectives there was no button for it.
- One visitor commented that “it is not clear whether you could have one or more photographs”.
- Another visitor was not sure what the camera icon stood for and wondered whether she was supposed to take a photograph using her own camera or using the computer.
- Lastly, another visitor wondered whether the photograph of his ring would be displayed on the screen.

2.2 Understanding of the exhibit

Content

- When prompted about their understanding of the exhibit visitors said that the exhibit was either about jewellery or rings in general or about designing a ring. More specifically:
 - Eleven visitors thought that the exhibit was about “designing jewellery or designing a ring”
 - Four visitors said that it was about “rings and/or jewellery”
 - One visitor said that the exhibit was about “interactive things with rings”

- Three quarters of visitors found the options provided in the main menu list quite clear. Two visitors said that they were not sure how many options they were allowed to choose while a couple of visitors complained that there were terms they did not understand, for example “wire decoration”, “motifs”, “enamel”.

Text

- With the exception of some technical terms visitors agreed that the text was, in general, easy to understand. Words or terms that visitors found difficult to understand included:
 - Enamel (8 visitors, 3 of whom assumed that the term referred to the colour of the ring)
 - Citrine (7 visitors)
 - Meander (3 visitors)
 - Love knot (4 visitors)
 - Gypsy (2 visitors)
 - Wire decoration (2 visitors)
 - Motifs (2 visitors)
 - Amethyst (one visitor)

Problems encountered and additional comments

In addition to their comments on the functionality of various buttons visitors were specifically asked if they noticed any further problems in the exhibit. Here is what they said:

- Five visitors reported that they did not read the instructions because these were at the bottom of the screen.
- One visitor stated that “the purpose of designing a ring is not clear”.
- One visitor commented that she would have been more inclined to choose a motif if she knew that there was the opportunity to alter it later.

2.3 Further exploration of the gallery

- Five visitors said that they would be inspired to explore further the jewellery gallery if they interacted with this exhibit either because they were jewellery

fans or because the exhibit “enhances their interest and knowledge” and “gets people involved”.

- Four visitors felt that they were not sure whether they would visit the jewellery gallery after interacting with the exhibit.
- Three visitors reported that they would not be visiting the jewellery gallery after interacting with the exhibit either because they were not interested in jewellery or because they did not feel that the information provided in the exhibit stimulated enough excitement to visit the gallery.
- Two visitors said that they would prefer to visit the jewellery gallery first and then interact with the exhibit rather than the opposite.
- Two visitors agreed that they “would enjoy the exhibit only as part of the exhibition”.
- Two visitors commented that the exhibit would be more appealing to younger audiences.

2.4 Visitors’ suggestions

Eleven out of 16 visitors offered their suggestions in order to improve the interactive. These included:

- “Put instructions on the top of the screen” (4 visitors)
- Offer a help button that would clarify problematic areas such as vocabulary (3 visitors)
- Provide an updated image of the ring you design at each stage (2 visitors)
- Provide a “back” button that would take people back to the previous screen (2 visitors)
- “Put it online so that people can play from home” (2 visitors)
- “Take a photograph with you at the end of the exhibition” (one visitor)
- “Be able to draw something so that the exhibit do not miss your own mark” (one visitor)
- “Put ‘rotate your ring and find a good angle’ and ‘press the camera icon to photograph your ring’ as two separate buttons directly under ‘continue working on your ring’, ‘submit your ring to the gallery’ and ‘email your ring to a friend’ buttons instead of having them at the bottom of the screen” (one visitor)

3 Conclusion and Suggestions

Functionality of buttons

- There was quite a clear understanding of what most of the buttons stood for.
- Buttons which presented problems were:
 - The “oval” and “rectangular” sections and their associated images which looked very similar and therefore made it difficult for visitors to distinguish between the two and understand their differences.
 - It was not clear for visitors whether “ring width” was referring to thickness of band or to ring size.
 - Almost 2/3 of visitors thought they could choose a “metal type” by just pressing the relevant button rather than by pressing and dragging.
 - Almost 1/3 of visitors thought the “return to menu” button would take them back to the start.
 - Visitors’ opinions were divided as to whether pressing the “add another motif” button would make them to choose a different motif or would add an extra motif to their ring.

Understanding of the exhibit

- The vast majority of visitors understood that the exhibit was about rings and/or jewellery and more specifically about designing your own ring and/or jewellery.
- The main problem encountered was that visitors did not notice the instructions which were placed at the bottom of the screen.
- Several visitors had difficulty in understanding the following terms: enamel; citrine; love knot; meander.

Further exploration of the gallery

- Only approximately 1/3 of visitors said that they would be inspired to explore further the jewellery gallery if they interacted with the exhibit.

Based on the above findings we suggest the following:

- Start from a very basic knowledge base. In case technical terms need to be used provide a glossary of terms or use hyperlinks to explain them.

- Put screen commands on a prominent position on each page, for example at the top half of the page, or change their font size and colour in order to increase visibility.
- Provide better sign-posting so that users can quickly understand what to do next, how they can go back to previous page and how they can go back to the beginning. Also, make sure that button captions are clear and appropriate so that users are not confused or misled.
- Visitors found the oval and rectangular sections confusing. Make sure the images that accompany the two sections clearly demonstrate their differences.
- Some visitors interpreted the phrase “ring width” to mean the size of the ring rather than the width of the band of the ring. It would be perhaps a good idea to use the term “band width” to differentiate it from ring size.
- It would be perhaps easier for visitors if they could make their selections by just pressing the appropriate button rather than by pressing and dragging.
- Consider providing additional interesting information about rings’ materials and artistic and design techniques in order to enhance the exhibit content and further stimulate users’ interest to explore the jewellery collection.

Appendix I

Design a ring questionnaire

Interviewer: If you are interviewing a group write down what each person says and indicate who says what e.g. M (for man), W (for woman), G (for girl), B (for boy) - if more than one, then M1, M2 etc.

Hello my name is ... and I work for the V&A. We are testing out a new interactive exhibit we are developing. Would you be interested in helping us test it out – it will only take 10 minutes? If they agree: This is a very early mock-up of an exhibit we are developing about jewellery and there are no active areas that you can explore. The final exhibit will be very different. Would you like to have a look and let me know what you think?

Walk visitors through the sample screens asking the following questions	
<p>[Oval/Rectangular section screen] Do you understand what the oval and rectangular sections stand for?</p> <p>[Menu screen] Do you understand the options provided? What do you think the start again button stands for? And what about the “ring complete” button?</p> <p>[Ring metal type screen] How do you think you could choose a metal type? And what the “return to menu” button stands for?</p> <p>[Metal finish screen] Can you tell the difference between these metal finishes?</p> <p>[Wire decoration screen] What about wire decoration – How do you think you choose a decoration for your ring? And what about these words - do you understand what they mean?</p> <p>[Motifs screen] Do you understand what all these buttons stand for?</p> <p>[Scale motif screen] What do you think these buttons “scale motif”; “rotate motif”; “remove motif”; “rotate ring”; “add another motif” stand for? How do you scale a motif?</p> <p>[Rotate motif screen] What those arrows stand for?</p> <p>[Edit motif – Rotate ring screen] What do you think the “edit motif” button stands for?</p> <p>[Gemstones screens] Do you understand what the “preview” button does? Are there any words that you do not understand?</p> <p>[Engraving screen] Do you understand what you are supposed to do here? What do the “type style” and the “engraving position” buttons stand for?</p> <p>[Enamel screen] Do you know what “enamel” is?</p> <p>[Presentation screens] Is there anything you do not understand on the last screens?</p>	

At the end of the walk through ask the visitor(s) the following questions

